

Planning Commission
Regular Meeting

February 28, 2024
6:30PM

Big Rapids City Hall
226 N Michigan Ave

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of Minutes
 - a. January 17, 2024
5. Public Comment Unrelated to Items on the Agenda
6. Public Hearing
 - a. Capital Improvement Program – review and recommend 2024-2030 CIP.
7. General Business
 - a. Review of By-laws
 - b. Annual Report
 - c. Update on previously approved projects - None
 - d. City Commission actions related to PC Recommendations - None
 - e. Master Plan Update
8. Unscheduled Business
9. Adjourn

CITY OF BIG RAPIDS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
January 17, 2024
Unapproved

Acting Chair Buse called the January 17, 2024 Meeting of the Planning Commission, to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT Rory Ruddick, Kate McLeod, Tim Vogel and Jacob Buse

EXCUSED None.

ABSENT Sarah Montgomery

ALSO PRESENT Michelle Stenger, Community Development Director
Joseph Walker, Planning & Zoning Technician

There were 5 members of the public in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Ruddick and seconded by McLeod to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2023 meeting of the planning commission as presented.

Motion was passed with all in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None heard.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None Heard.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- a. Update on previously approved projects
 - i. Krist Oil

Community Development Director Stenger informed the commissioners that Krist Oil had retracted their request for an extension on their approved site plan for the gas station proposed at 827 N State Street. Staff and representatives from Krist had determined that the extension would not be needed by Krist's expected completion date for the project.

b. City Commission actions related to PC Recommendations

i. Short-Term Rentals

Director Stenger gave the commissioners an update on the short-term rental policy that the Planning Commission had recommended to the City Commission. The policy had not yet been passed or denied.

c. Master Plan Update

Director Stenger and Staff updated the board on the ongoing public input process helping to shape the Big Rapids Master Plan update. Stenger informed the commissioners of the upcoming charettes taking place on the 30th and 31st of January. Planning commissioners had already been invited to specific charettes, and were welcomed along with the public to attend the charrette regarding the Big Rapids downtown, which was also open to the public.

UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS

There being no further business, Chair Montgomery adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m. with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joey Walker
Planning & Zoning Technician and Planning Commission Secretary

City of Big Rapids
Capital Improvements Program
2024-2030

Acknowledgements

City Commission

Fred Guenther, Mayor
Jon Eppley
Lorraine James
Amanda Johnson
Karen Simmon

Planning Commission

Sarah Montgomery, Chair
Jacob Buse
Tim Vogel
Rory Ruddick
Kate McLeod

Adopted: (PENDING)
March 18, 2024

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Introduction

A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is a multi-year planning instrument used to identify needs and financing sources for public infrastructure improvements. The purpose of a CIP is to facilitate the orderly planning of infrastructure improvements; to maintain, preserve, and protect the City of Big Rapids' existing infrastructure system; and to provide for the acquisition or scheduled replacement of equipment to ensure the efficient delivery of services to the community. The CIP is also utilized to ensure that capital improvements are fiscally sound and consistent with the goals and policies of the governing body and the residents of the community.

A comprehensive CIP is an essential tool for the planning and development of the social, physical, and economic wellbeing of the community. The process of creating a CIP is a necessary part of an organized effort to strengthen the quality of public facilities and services; provide a framework for the realization of community goals and objectives; and provide a sound basis on which to build a healthy and vibrant community.

The CIP informs Big Rapids residents and stakeholders on how the municipality plans to address significant capital needs over the next six years. The CIP provides visual representations of the community's needs including tables that detail the timing, sequence, and location of capital projects. The CIP can also influence growth because infrastructure can impact development patterns.

Some of the benefits that the CIP provides for the residents and stakeholders include:

- Optimizing the uses of revenue
- Focusing attention on community goals, needs, and capabilities
- Guiding future growth and development
- Encouraging efficient government
- Improving intergovernmental and regional cooperation
- Helping maintain a sound and stable financial program
- Enhancing opportunities for the participation in federal and/or state grant programs

The projects identified in the CIP represent the community's plan to serve residents and anticipate the needs of a dynamic community. Projects are guided by various development plans and policies established by the City Commission, Planning Commission, and City administration.

Plans and policies include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Master Plan Addendum 2018 | • Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2012 |
| • Downtown Blueprint Update 2016 | • Goals and Objectives of City Commission |
| • Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan | • 2020 Housing Study |
| • Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2022-2026 | • Administrative Policies |

Mission Statement

Preparation of the CIP is done under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008). The goal of the CIP should be to implement the master plan and to assist in the community's financial planning.

The CIP is dynamic. Each year all projects included within the CIP are reviewed, a call for new projects is made, and adjustments are made to existing projects arising from changes in the amount of funding required, conditions, or timeline. A new year of programming is also added each year to replace the year funded in the annual operating budget.

The CIP program should continue to develop over time by adding features to gradually improve quality and sophistication. Greater attention shall be devoted to providing more detailed information about individual project requests, program planning, fiscal analysis, fiscal policies, and developing debt strategy.

CIP and Budget Process

The CIP plays a significant role in the implementation of a master plan by providing the link between planning and budgeting for capital projects. The CIP process precedes the budget process and is used to develop the capital projects portion of the annual budget. Recommending approval of the CIP by the Planning Commission does not mean that they grant final approval of all projects contained within the plan. Rather by recommending approval of the CIP, the Planning Commission acknowledges that these projects represent a reasonable interpretation of the upcoming needs for the community and that projects contained in the first year of the plan are suitable for inclusion in the upcoming budget.

Priority rankings do not necessarily correspond to funding sequence. For example, a road-widening project which is ranked lower than a park project may be funded before the park project because the road project has access to a restricted revenue source, whereas a park project may have to compete for funding from other revenue sources. A project's funding depends upon several factors-not only its merit, but also its location, cost, funding source, and logistics.

The community of Big Rapids should strive to maximize resources by maintaining a balance between operating and capital budgets. A continuous relationship exists between the CIP and the annual budget. A direct link can be seen between the two documents, as there should be in a strategic planning environment. Budget appropriations lapse at the end of the fiscal year as the operating budget is funded with recurring annual revenues such as taxes, licenses, fines, user fees, and interest income.

Definition

As used in the City of Big Rapids Capital Improvements Program (CIP), a capital improvement project is defined as a project that results in the acquisition, addition, updating, or development of physical facilities. A capital improvement project may also include contractual or bonded indebtedness payments related to fix assets, or any major expenditure for physical development, which generally falls into one of the following categories:

1. Land and non-structural improvements
2. New structures
3. Major repairs - \$7,500 or more
4. Major replacements - \$7,500 or more
5. Non-motorized equipment - \$7,500 or more

Additionally, capital improvements are generally defined as the following:

- a) New and expanded physical facilities for the community which are relatively large-in-size, expensive, and permanent.
- b) Large scale rehabilitation or replacement of existing facilities.
- c) Major pieces of equipment which have a direct relationship to the function of a physical facility, and which are relatively expensive and of long life.
- d) Purchase of equipment for any public improvements when first erected or acquired that are to be financed in whole or in part from bond funds.
- e) The cost of engineering and architectural studies and surveys related to an anticipated improvement.

CIP Process

Groups and Rules

Project Analysis & Prioritization

Capital Improvement Approval

Process

The process of creating the Capital Improvements Program took place over five months and including staff from every department in the City.

Groups and Roles

The first step in the process was getting the different people and groups necessary to fill vital roles in drafting the Capital Improvements Program. The groups and roles are described below:

Policy Group: reviews the policy, develops the project rating and weighting criteria, rates and weights project applications, and presents the recommendation to the Administrative Group.

- City Manager
- City Treasurer
- Director of Public Works
- Police Chief
- Fire Chief
- Superintendent of Water Plant
- Superintendent of Wastewater Plant
- Street Superintendent
- Community Development Director

Administrative Group: clarifies any issues, finalizes the priorities, and brings the CIP draft forward to the Planning Commission.

- City Manager
- City Treasurer
- Community Development Director

Planning Commission: works with the Policy Group during the plan development, conducts workshops (if necessary), reviews the Policy Group's recommendation, receives public input, and makes recommendations to the City Commission to adopt the plan and consider incorporating funding for the first-year projects into the annual budget.

City Commission: adopts the CIP, uses the CIP as a tool in the adoption of the annual budget in accordance with the governing body goals and objectives.

Residents: encouraged to participate in plan development by working with various boards and commissions at the Planning Commission meetings, and at the City Commission's budget workshops and public hearings. As always, communication is open between residents, City Commissioners, Planning Commissioners, and staff.

Project Analysis and Prioritization

Upon receiving requests from various Departments for capital improvement funding, the Policy Group engaged in a process of scoring projects utilizing the following review criteria:

1. Project will improve quality of life and/or quality of service of residents and users.
2. If deferred, absence of project would negatively impact residents and users.
3. Project is part of a multi-year funding commitment.
4. Project is part of, or complements, other ongoing projects.
5. Project is part of an approved City plan.

Projects were scored on a scale from 1-5. Additionally, departments proposing projects provided an internal department priority ranking out of the number of projects proposed. Average scores and department priorities are included in the final project tables.

After reviewing department priorities and Policy Group scoring, the Administrative Group prioritized projects and recommend projects to the Planning Commission according to the following categories:

Priority 1: Essential

Project cannot be postponed, as it is essential; partially completed; meets an emergency situation, or remedies a condition dangerous to public health, welfare, or safety; or the City is committed by contractual arrangement. Only essential projects should be so classified.

Priority 2: Desirable

Project should be carried out within a few years to meet anticipated needs of a current program or for the replacement of unsatisfactory facilities. These include projects that are needed to maintain the department program at current level of performance, projects that would benefit the community, and projects whose validity of planning and validity of timing have been established.

Priority 3: Acceptable

Project is needed for the proper expansion of a program or facility with the exact timing, waiting, until funds are available. These are projects that are adequately planned, but not absolutely required, and should be deferred to a subsequent year if budget reductions are necessary.

Priority 4: Deferrable

Project is needed for an ideal operation but cannot yet be recommended for action. Can safely be deferred beyond the third year of the six-year projection.

Priority 5: Needs Further Study

Project is desirable but not essential, can be safely postponed without detriment to preset services, rated lowest of those submitted, and/or needs further study before being recommended for funding.

Capital Improvement Approval

While the Planning Commission will play an important role in developing a CIP, recommendations coming from the Planning Commission to the City Commission are purely advisory in nature. It is the sole responsibility of the City Commission to approve and adopt a CIP for any given year.

The Planning Commission reviewed the CIP on _____ and unanimously recommended that the City Commission adopt the 2024-2030 Capital Improvement Plan.

The City Commission adopted the Capital Improvement Plan at their regular meeting on _____

Program Funding

General Fund

Major & Local Streets

Downtown Development Authority

Library Fund

Airport Fund

Dial-A-Ride Transit Fund

Wastewater & Wastewater Replacement

Program Funding

The City of Big Rapids has several funding sources for these Capital Improvements projects. This is necessary due to the substantial financial resources required to meet the goals of the Program. Most capital funding sources are earmarked for specific purposes and cannot be transferred from one capital program to another. For example, funds raised by the community for fire protection services must be used for the purposes that were stated when the voters approved the funding. The CIP has to be prepared with some projects as to the amount of money available. The following is a summary of the funding sources for projects included in the CIP.

General Fund

The General Fund is the fund that is responsible for many of the daily operations of the City. The fund has three major revenue sources: property tax, income tax, and state shared revenue. Collectively, these three revenue items are responsible for 87% of General Fund income. Over the last fiscal year, the revenue collected from these sources has increased for income tax and property, revenue sharing has decreased due to decrease in 2020 census population. The largest driver of cost in the General Fund is public safety related expenditures which account for roughly 43% of the budget. As a best practice measure, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends retaining a fund balance of two months of operating expenses, which is approximately \$1,400,000 for the City of Big Rapids.

Major and Local Streets

The Michigan Department of Transportation, through Public Act 51, requires each incorporated municipality to submit an annual report to the State Transportation Commission identifying any changes made to the mileage of their street system. Changes to the street system, if they meet the State's specifications, are reflected on the City's Certified Mileage Map. Certified mileage for major and local streets are used to distribute Act 51 revenues to communities. These revenues are derived by taxes imposed directly or indirectly on vehicle fuel sales. The City of Big Rapids currently has 37.90 miles of certified streets, including 14.50 miles of major streets and 23.40 miles of local streets.

Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was created in 1985 to correct and prevent deterioration and to promote economic growth within the downtown area. The DDA governing body consists of individuals that were appointed by the City Commission, who also approves the DDA budget. The DDA is funded with a 1.9728 mill tax levied on all taxable property within the district. It is also responsible for the promotion and funding of downtown activities, such as the Big Rapids Farmer's Market.

Library Fund

The Library Fund is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Big Rapids Community Library. The Library is funded from several different sources: .9969 mill levied by the City of Big Rapids, penal fine distributions, state aid, a 0.2 mill levy from Big Rapids Charter Township, and a subsidy from the City's General Fund. Salaries, fringe benefits, and library materials comprise most of the Library's current budget. In 2014, the City issued bonds in the amount of \$530,000 to renovate the existing facility. The Library Fund is responsible for the debt service associated with this bond issue. The bond for the renovation will be paid off in fiscal year 2024-2025.

Airport Fund

The Airport Fund is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Roben Hood Airport. It is funded through fuel sales, rent from hangar leases, mechanic services, and subsidies from the City's General Fund. The main drivers of costs are salaries and fringe benefits for airport staff, fuel purchases, and debt service on the Community Hangar. The Airport is working on an expansion plan to extend a runway, allowing for larger planes to land. This expansion is included in this year's CIP.

Dial-A-Ride Transit Fund

The City's Dial-a-Ride Transit (DART) system has been providing "curb to curb" public transportation service to the Big Rapids community since 1975. DART has provided more than 3.5 million rides, offering safe, dependable, affordable transportation through a shared ride, demand-response public transportation service. Many patrons use DART as their sole source for fulfilling shopping, medical, education, and socializing needs. DART is a key amenity which separates the City of Big Rapids from other regional communities, providing the ability to get anywhere in Big Rapids to all persons. The DART Fund is supported by several different sources, including Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), federal funding, Ferris State University shuttle service, passenger fares, and the City's General Fund.

Wastewater and Wastewater Replacement

The purpose of the Big Rapids Wastewater Collection System and Treatment Plant is to protect public health and preserve the aquatic environment, thereby enhancing the quality of life for area residents. The wastewater system serves an 11-square mile area, which encompasses three jurisdictions: the City of Big Rapids, Big Rapids Charter Township, and Green Charter Township. Each community owns and operates their own wastewater collection system, including gravity sewers, pumping stations, and force mains. The City of Big Rapids owns and operates the Publicly Owned Treatment Works

(POTW), also known as the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The WWTP is funded by user fees collected from the approximately 2,200 customers of the system. The wastewater collection and treatment system serves a population of approximately 20,000 people. The system has approximately 33 miles of gravity and force sewer mains as well as 15 lift stations. The Wastewater Replacement Fund is supported by annual contributions from each municipality that is connected to the system.

Water and Water Replacement Funds

The City's water system includes the operation and maintenance of the City's Water Treatment Plant, the distribution lines from the plant, and the upkeep of four water towers. The Water Fund's major revenue source is the usage rates collected from roughly 2,200 customers. Each year, rates are reviewed to correctly account for the funds needed to operate and maintain the plant. The Water Fund has three main cost centers: Production, Transmission, and Customer Service, with production accounting for about 45% of the budget. The Water Fund also transfers resources to the Water Replacement Fund for capital projects related to the water system.

The Water Replacement Fund exists to account for the replacement of capital items throughout the water system. It is funded by quarterly transfers from the Water Fund. The City has a goal to deposit \$700,000 per year into this fund to properly maintain the water system.

Motor Pool Fund

The City's Motor Pool is a part of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and maintains a variety of different vehicles and equipment, including 7 Dial-A-Ride buses, 44 pickups and cars, 4 loaders and backhoes with various attachments, 7 dump trucks with plows, scrapers, and spreaders. The Motor Pool also maintains everything from garbage trucks to chainsaws for use by DPW. In total, the Motor Pool maintains over 240 different pieces of equipment. Maintenance and replacement programs are in place to ensure the safety and utility of all vehicles. The Motor Pool Fund is supported by equipment rental charges to all funds that use the equipment.

Capital Improvements Program

2024-2030

2024-2025 Projects Funded			
Airport Fund			
Runway 9 Extension	Extension of runway, city will be reimbursed over next 3-4 years, responsible for 5% of project costs	\$ 830,000	This project will be financed and then partially reimbursed over multiple years
General Fund			
Zoning Ordinance Update	Update whole zoning ordinance once master plan is done	\$ 50,000	MSHDA grant funding, no match required
Clay Cliffs	Develop a mile of ADA compliance trail within Clay Cliffs	\$ 500,000	Grant funding for \$400,000, match is \$100,000
Banners - Depot Trail & Baldwin Street Bridge	Develop plans for putting lights and banners to Depot Trail and Baldwin Street Bridge (up to the hill)	\$ 25,000	
Engine 4	Replace a 1998 Fire Engine	\$ 100,000	
Drinking Fountain/Water Station	Replace current drinking fountain with fountain and water filling stations at public safety	\$ 7,500	
100 S Warren	Mill and Pave, Replace asphalt under carports with concrete	\$ 75,000	\$45,900 of this money is for the concrete, which the Housing Commission will pay
Public Safety Parking Lot	Mill and replace existing asphalt in the parking lots and driveways	\$ 40,000	Back portion only
N End Park Restroom	Add 6 unisex bathrooms at Northend park	\$ 160,000	
Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	\$ 50,000	
Motor Pool			
Dump Truck	Replace 2000 Dump Truck	\$ 200,000	
Police ATV	Purchase an ATV to help patrol local trail system	\$ 50,000	
DPW Parking Lot	Maintenance of existing parking lot to prevent replacement	\$ 25,000	
DDA Fund			
DDA Signage	New signage for the downtown	\$ 50,000	The total is \$100,000, \$50,000 carryover from last year
Pool Fund			
Pool Marcite	Deep end of the pool marcite to fix it before we see structural damage (3 years funding)	\$ 51,542	
Local Streets			
Asphalt Mill & Fill S. Stewart & 4 th Ave	Remove and repave asphalt services	\$ 180,000	

W. Waterloo St	Pulverize and repave waterloo, going from 20 feet to 22 feet wide	\$ 105,000	
<i>Major Streets</i>			
Fuller Ave	Pave half of the road that the water fund cannot cover	\$ 105,000	
<i>Waste Water Fund</i>			
Digester, Aeration Feasibility	Feasibility study for correction size of blowers, diffusers	\$ 40,000	
EQ Basin Blower Motor	Replace EQ Basin Blower Motor	\$ 14,000	
<i>Water Fund</i>			
Water Tower Cleaning	Clean Perry & State Street water towers	\$ 8,750	
HMC Upgrades	Install larger pump at location for fire suppression efforts in the subdivision	\$ 500,000	
Lead Service Line Replacement	Replace identified service lines	\$ 50,000	
Repaint Clarifiers	Repaint both clarifiers	\$ 560,000	
Fuller Ave Water Main	Replace old water main with 12" main (broke 7 times already)	\$ 580,000	
WTP SCADA Upgrade	SCADA upgrades on all satellite sites	\$ 230,260	
Valve Turner	Replace a current valve turner that is no longer serviceable	\$ 100,000	
Insert Valves	Install two new valves to eliminate a leaking valve behind Fairman Building	\$ 66,000	

2024-2025 Project Requests

<i>Department</i>	Project Title	Brief Description	Dept Ranking	Request	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
<i>Airport</i>	Runway 9 Extension	Extension of runway, city will be reimbursed over next 3-4 years, responsible for 5% of project costs	1	\$830,000	1.6666667	\$ 830,000	This project will be financed and then partially reimbursed over multiple years
<i>Community Development</i>	Zoning Ordinance Update	Update whole zoning ordinance once master plan is done	1	\$50,000	2	\$ 50,000	MSHDA grant funding, no match required
	Clay Cliffs	Develop a mile of ADA compliance trail within Clay Cliffs	1	\$500,000	2.8333333	\$ 500,000	Grant funding for \$400,000, match is \$100,000
	Banners - Depot Trail & Baldwin Street Bridge	Develop plans for putting lights and banners to Depot Trail and Baldwin Street Bridge (up to the hill	3	\$25,000	2	\$ 25,000	
<i>Fire Department</i>	Engine 4	Replace a 1998 Fire Engine	1	\$500,000	2.1666667	\$ 100,000	
<i>Library</i>	RFID Security Gates and inventory wand	Security gates prevent someone from leaving the library with inventory, wand allows for self-checkout	1	\$25,000	3	\$ -	
<i>Motor Pool</i>	Dump Truck	Replace 2000 Dump Truck	1	\$200,000	1.3333333	\$ 200,000	
	Police Car	Replace 2019 Ford Interceptor	2	\$70,000	1.8333333	\$ -	This project is funded in 2023-2024 budget
	Police ATV	Purchase an ATV to help patrol local trail system	3	\$50,000	3.5	\$ 50,000	
<i>Public Safety</i>	Facilities	Stabilize the building foundation	1	\$100,000	1.167	\$ -	Gap readers have installed to measure the movement over time
	Drinking Fountain/Water Station	Replace current drinking fountain with fountain and water filling stations	1	\$7,500	3.3333333	\$ 7,500	
<i>Public Works</i>	100 S Warren	Mill and Pave, Replace asphalt under carports with concrete	1	\$75,000	2.1666667	\$ 75,000	\$45,900 of this money is for the concrete, which the Housing Commission will pay
	Public Safety Parking Lot	Mill and replace existing asphalt in the parking lots and driveways	2	\$85,000	2.8333333	\$ 40,000	Back portion only

2024-2025 Project Requests

<i>Department</i>	Project Title	Brief Description	Dept Ranking	Request	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
<i>Public Works</i>	DDA Signage	New signage for the downtown	1	\$50,000	1.5	\$ 50,000	The total is \$100,000, \$50,000 carryover from last year
	W. Waterloo St	Pulverize and repave waterloo, going from 20 feet to 22 feet wide	1	\$105,000	1	\$ 105,000	
	DPW Break Room	Update failing brake room floors and furniture	3	\$15,000	3	\$ -	
	DPW Parking Lot	Maintenance of existing parking lot to prevent replacement	1	\$25,000	1.8333333	\$ 25,000	
	Valve Turner	Replace a current valve turner that is no longer serviceable	1	\$100,000	1.3333333	\$ 100,000	
	N End Park Restroom	Add 6 unisex bathrooms at Northend park	1	\$160,000	1.8333333	\$ 160,000	
	Pool Marcite	Deep end of the pool marcite to fix it before we see structural damage (3 years funding)	1	\$51,542	2.3333333	\$ 51,542	
	Mitchell Crk Ct	Replaces a sagging line that causes issues	1	\$165,000	1	\$ -	Next year this will be part of the WWTP/Infrastructure Bond
	Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	1	\$50,000	1.3333333	\$ 50,000	
	Darwin Street	Complete reconstruct of Darwin, storm and water (2-year funding)	1	\$300,000	1.6666667	\$ -	
	Division Street	7 Manholes, storm pipe, road, sanitary sewer (2-year funding)	3	\$175,000	3.1666667	\$ -	This could be a part of the WWTP/Infrastructure Bond
	Fuller Ave	Pave half of the road that the water fund cannot cover	1	\$105,000	3	\$ 105,000	
	Hanson Street	Final gravel street upgrade (3-year funding)	1	\$200,000	3	\$ -	
	Asphalt Mill & Fill S. Stewart & 4 th Ave	remove and repave asphalt services	1	\$180,000	2	\$ 180,000	

2024-2025 Project Requests							
Department	Project Title	Brief Description	Dept Ranking	Request	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
	Mitchell Crk Ct	Mill and Pave	2	\$90,000	2.1666667	\$ -	Maybe able to link with Pine to Bernies in future
Public Works	Insert Valves	Install two new valves to eliminate a leaking valve behind Fairman Building	1	\$66,000	2	\$ 66,000	
	Fuller Ave Water Main	Replace old water main with 12" main (broke 7 times already)	1	\$580,000	1	\$ 580,000	
Wastewater	East Screw Pump	Money has been set aside in 20/21, 21/22, 22/23 to complete	1	\$300,000	1.1666667	\$ -	Next year this will be part of the WWTP/Infrastructure Bond
	Digester, Aeration Feasibility	Feasibility study for correction size of blowers, diffusers	2	\$40,000	1.8333333	\$ 40,000	
	EQ Basin Blower Motor	Replace EQ Basin Blower Motor	3	\$14,000	3.1666667	\$ 14,000	
Water Treatment Plant	Water Tower Cleaning	Clean Perry & State Street water towers	2	\$8,750	2.2857143	\$ 8,750	
	HMC Upgrades	Install larger pump at location for fire suppression efforts in the subdivision	4	\$500,000	2.2857143	\$ 500,000	
	Lead Service Line Replacement	Replace identified service lines	1	\$50,000	1.4285714	\$ 50,000	
	Repaint Clarifiers	Repaint both clarifiers	5	\$560,000	2.8571429	\$ 560,000	
	WTP SCADA Upgrade	SCADA upgrades on all satellite sites	3	\$230,260	2	\$ 230,260	

Totals:

Projects Requested: 38

Money Requested: \$6,638,052

Projects Funded: 28

Money Funded: \$4,753,052

2025-2026 Projects							
Department	Project Title	Brief Description	Dept Ranking	Request	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
Fire Department	Extrication Equipment	Upgrade Jaws of Life equipment	1	\$40,000	1.75	\$40,000	
Motor Pool	Maintenance Van	Replacing 2007 Chevy, Van with shelving	1	\$75,000	2.5	\$75,000	Possible Water Plant Funding
	Maintenance Truck	Replace a 2006 Chevy with new 3/4-ton plow and lift gate truck	2	\$85,000	2.1666667	\$85,000	
	Engineering Truck	Replace a 2008 4x4 truck with topper	3	\$75,000	2.1666667	\$75,000	
Public Safety	Public Safety Community Room	Upgrade audio visual system for PS Community Room	3	\$50,000	2.6666667	\$50,000	
	Lidar	Update existing Lidar (speed and distance models)	1	\$25,000	2.1666667	\$25,000	
	Speed Trailer	New Speed Trailer, existing does not work	1	\$25,000	2.1666667	\$25,000	
Public Works	Woodward Culvert	Replace existing culvert on Woodward Ave	1	\$600,000	1.4	600,000	Partially funded through State money
	Pool Marcite	Deep end of the pool marcite to fix it before we see structural damage (3 years funding)	1	\$51,542	2.1666667	\$51,542	
	Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	1	\$50,000	1.3333333	\$50,000	
	Darwin Street	Complete reconstruct of Darwin, storm and water (2-year funding)	1	\$300,000	2	\$ 0	
	Division Street	7 Manholes, storm pipe, road, sanitary sewer (2-year funding)	3	\$175,000	2.5	\$ 0	Potential to be part of Bond
	300 Block Henderson	Henderson street paving (last section). Darwin Street must be done first	2	\$250,000	2.3333333	\$ 0	
	Hanson Street	Final gravel street upgrade (3-year funding)	1	\$200,000	2.5	\$ 0	

2025-2026 Projects							
Department	Project Title	Brief Description	Dept Ranking	Request	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
Public Works	Speer to City Limit Water Main	Citizen Request to extend water main from Harding to city limits (2-year funding project)	1	\$490,000	2.3333333	\$490,000	
Wastewater	Novak Lane Lift Station	Remove and install new lift station	1	\$695,000	1.3333333	\$695,000	Part of the Bond
	WWTP Scada System	Replace and upgrade SCADA server hardware and software throughout plant and lift station	2	\$415,000	2	\$415,000	Part of the Bond
	D.O. Equipment Basins	Replace existing D.O. equipment, basins, and digesters	3	\$100,000	3	\$100,000	Part of the Bond
	Lighting Upgrade	Retrofit and upgrade light fixtures to explosion proof LED lights	4	\$34,000	4	\$34,000	
Water Treatment Plant	WTP Roof Maintenance	Have a portion of the roof restored		\$100,000	1.5714286	\$100,000	
	Bulk Water Fill Station	Install a bulk water filling station in industrial park		\$75,000	2.1428571	\$75,000	
	Distribution Valve Replacement	Replace 4 valves and add an additional valve		\$150,000	2	\$150,000	

Totals:

Projects Requested: 22

Money Requested: \$4,060,542

Projects Funded: 18

Money Funded: \$3,135,542

2026-2027 Projects

Department	Project Title	Brief Description	Dept Ranking	Cost	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
Fire Department	IT Improvement	Replacement of 3 computers and a monodpad used for training	1	\$15,000	2	\$15,000	Possibly do 2025-2026 with other improvements
Motor Pool	Police Car	Replace a 2022 Ford Interceptor	1	\$75,000	1.3333333	\$75,000	
	1 Ton Truck	Replace a 2008 Ford (over 300,000 miles) with a 1-ton 4x4 Diesel with plow and 5th wheel hitch	2	\$55,000	1.8333333	\$55,000	
	1 Ton Truck	Replace 2005 Chevy Truck (Grass Rigg)	3	60,000	3.1666667	\$60,000	
Public Works	Compost Site	Need to create a new site as existing is not in compliance with E.G.L.E.	1	\$125,000	1.8333333	\$0	Is there a timeline required by EGLE
	Pool Marcite	Deep end of the pool marcite to fix it before we see structural damage (3 years funding)	1	\$51,542	2.1666667	\$51,542	
	Swede Hill Restroom	Adding permanent restroom facility for two unisex bathrooms and maintenance, onsite well and septic	1	\$415,000	2.5	\$415,000	On sewer & water not septic and well
	Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	1	\$50,000	1.5	\$50,000	
	Hanson Street	Final gravel street upgrade (3-year funding)	1	\$200,000	2.5	\$0	
	Speer to City Limit Water Main	Citizen Request to extend water main from Harding to city limits (2-year funding project)	1	\$490,000	2.3333333	\$490,000	
	Woodward Ave Storm	Storm sewer replacement, Bailey to Ridgeview, at risk of failing	1	\$110,000	1.8333333	\$110,000	
Wastewater	Aeration Basin Blowers	Replace 3 blowers and related piping and SCADA controls	1	\$873,000	1.8333333	\$873,000	Bond Issue
	Aeration Diffusers	Replace aeration diffusers in all four basins	2	\$100,000	2.3333333	\$100,000	Bond Issue
	Headworks Heater	Replace the heater in headworks building	3	\$100,000	2.5	\$100,000	Bond Issue

Wastewater	Headworks Staircase	Replace current cement staircases	3	\$90,000	3.8333333	\$90,000	Bond Issue
Water Treatment Plant	Booster Pump @ State Street	Install a new pump at the State Street Booster Station		\$100,000	1.7142857	\$100,000	

Totals:

Projects Requested: 16

Money Requested: \$2,909,542

Projects Funded: 14

Money Funded: \$2,584,542

2027-2028 Projects

Department	Project Title	Brief Description	Dep Ranking	Cost	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
Fire Department	Fire Hose Replacement	This is to request additional hose to what is existing, not a replacement	1	\$20,000	1.5	\$20,000	
Motor Pool	Police Car	Replace a 2022 Ford Interceptor	1	\$75,000	1	\$75,000	
	Engineering Truck	Replace a 2008 Chevy with a 4x4 truck with topper	2	\$75,000	2	\$75,000	
	Wing Mower	Replace a 2002 Wing Mower	3	\$85,000	3	\$85,000	
Public Works	Hemlock Park Pavilion	Replace the hemlock park pavilion	1	\$417,300	1.6666667	\$0	
	Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	1	\$50,000	1.3333333	\$50,000	
Wastewater	Aerobic Digester Blowers	Replace 4 Lobe Blowers and Piping, update SCADA controls	1	\$1,672,000	2	\$1,672,000	Bonding Issue
	Digester Diffusers	Replace all the diffusers in the north and south digester	2	\$50,000	2.1666667	\$50,000	Bonding Issue
Water Treatment	Clean Wells 1 & 4	Clean two wells to remove loose material and screens	1	\$55,000	1.1428571	\$55,000	

Totals:

Projects Requested: 9

Money Requested: \$2,499,300

Projects Funded: 8

Money Funded: \$2,082,000

2028-2029 Projects

Department	Project Title	Brief Description	Dep Ranking	Cost	Ranking Average	Funded Amount	Notes on Project
Fire	Individual Thermal Imagers	Thermal imaging cameras for all fulltime firefighters	1	\$10,000	1.5	\$10,000	
Motor Pool	Police Car	Replace a 2022 Ford Interceptor	1	\$75,000	1	\$75,000	
Motor Pool	Woodchipper	Replace a 1998 Woodchipper	2	\$85,000	2.6666667	\$85,000	
Motor Pool	Blacktop Roller	Replace a 1991 Blacktop Roller	3	\$60,000	2.8333333	\$60,000	
Public Works	Pipe Storage Building	72x40 Pole barn with a lean too to store piping and equipment	2	\$120,000	2.6666667	\$0	Assess Need
Public Works	Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	1	\$50,000	1.3333333	\$50,000	
Public Works	W. Waterloo St	pulverize existing mater and add 2 inches of new asphalt	1	\$105,000	2.3333333	105,000	Find a way to move up if possible
Wastewater	Vortex Grit Removal	Install new grit removal machinery	1	\$906,000	1.6666667	\$906,000	Bond Issue
Wastewater	Exterior Doors	Replace 12 exterior doors	2	\$60,000	2.6666667	\$0	Assess Need
Water Treatment Plant	New Lab Equipment	Replace spectrophotometer to ensure adequate readings		\$10,000	1.5714286	\$10,000	

Totals:

Projects Requested: 10

Money Requested: \$1,481,000

Projects Funded: 8

Money Funded: \$1,301,000

2029-2030 Projects

<u>Department</u>	<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Dep Ranking</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Ranking Average</u>	<u>Funded Amount</u>	<u>Notes on Project</u>
Fire	Water Tender Replacement	Replace two 1993 tenders with a tender of larger capacity	1	\$400,000	1.666666667	400,000	
Motor Pool	Street Sweeper	Replace 2006 Street Sweeper	1	\$170,000	1.5	170,000	
Public Works	Sidewalk Program	Annual program, \$25,000 maintenance, \$25,000 new sidewalks	1	\$50,000	1.333333333	50,000	
Public Works	Michigan & Grand Traverse Water Service Line	Replace road and water services	1	\$200,000	2	200,000	
Wastewater	Sieve Drom Concentrator	Replace Sieve Drom Concentrator machine and related piping	1	\$909,000	2	909,000	Bond Issue
Wastewater	Digester Insulated Covers	Build and install insulated covers of digesters and insulate perimeter walls	2	\$865,000	2.5	\$0	
Wastewater	Tioga Park Lift Station	Replace pumps, electrical controls, ballast and coat piping	2	\$100,000	2.2	\$100,000	Bond Issue
Water Treatment Plant	Gilbert Drive/205th/Perry	Loop Gilbert Drive back to Perry with 12" water main	1	2,000,000	3.166666667	\$0	
Water Treatment Plant	Redundant Raw Water Main	Install second raw water main from well house to water plant		\$2,000,000	2.833333333	\$0	

Totals:

Projects Requested: 9

Money Requested: \$6,694,000

Projects Funded: 6

Money Funded: \$1,829,000

CITY OF BIG RAPIDS PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. AUTHORITY

These Bylaws and Rules of Procedure are adopted by the City of Big Rapids Planning Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Planning Commission) pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended; the Big Rapids Zoning Ordinance; Chapter 33 of the City Code of Ordinances; the Big Rapids City Charter, Chapter XIV; the Open Meetings Act, P.A. 267 of 1976, as amended; and the Freedom of Information Act, P.A. 442 of 1976, as amended.

2. OFFICERS/MEMBERS

2.1 Selection. At the annual organizational meeting held in September, the Planning Commission shall select from its membership, a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary. The City Manager shall appoint a Recording Secretary who need not be a member of the Planning Commission.

2.2 Duties. A Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and shall conduct all meetings in accordance with the rules provided herein. The Vice Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson shall act in the capacity of the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall succeed to the office of Chairperson in the *event* of a vacancy in that office, in which case the Planning Commission shall select a successor to the office of Vice Chairperson at the earliest possible time.

2.3 Tenure. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary shall take office immediately following their election, and shall hold their office for a term of twelve months. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary shall not serve for more than three consecutive terms.

2.4 Attendance. If a Commission member misses three consecutive meetings unexcused or four meetings in any six month period the member will be removed from the Commission.

2.5 Members. A regular member of the Zoning Board of Appeals may serve as a member of the Planning Commission.

2.6 Members. Cities with a population of 5,000 and above may have one Planning Commission member who does not reside in and is not eligible to *vote* in the City.

3. MEETINGS

3.1 Meeting Notices. All meetings shall be posted by the Secretary at City Hall in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The notice shall include the date, place, and time of the Planning Commission meetings.

3.2 Annual Organizational Meeting. The annual organizational meeting of the Planning Commission shall be the first regular meeting in the month of September of each year. At the annual organizational meeting the Planning Commission shall:

- 1) Elect officers for the ensuing year.
- 2) Appoint a Recording Secretary.
- 3) Review the Planning Commission budget for the ensuing year.

3.3 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Planning Commission shall be held monthly in City Hall on the third Wednesday of the month. The Secretary shall post, at City Hall the meeting date, place, and time of the regular meetings of the Planning Commission within the first ten days after the first meeting in each calendar year (January). Any changes in the date, place, or time of the regular meetings shall be posted in the same manner. When a regular meeting date falls on or near a legal holiday, the Planning Commission may select a suitable alternative date in the same month and post the change at City Hall.

3.4 Special Meetings. A special meeting may be called by the Chairperson or by three members of the Planning Commission upon written request to the Chairperson. The business which the Planning Commission may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the Planning Commission held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Public Notice of the date, place, time and topic of the special meeting shall be given in a manner as required by the Open Meetings Act. The Secretary shall send written notice of a special meeting to Planning Commission members no fewer than 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

3.5 Quorum. In order for the Planning Commission to conduct business or take any official action, a quorum consisting of the majority of the voting members of the Planning Commission (four members) shall be present. When a quorum is not present, no official action, except for closing of the meeting may take place. The members of the Planning Commission may discuss matters of interest, but can take no action until the next regular or special meeting. Any public hearing(s) that may have been scheduled shall be rescheduled for the next regular meeting at the same time.

3.6 Order of Business. A written agenda for all regular meetings shall be prepared, and the order of business shall be:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Approval of Minutes

- 4) Public Comments (not related to items on the agenda)
- 5) City Commission Actions
- 6) Public Hearings
- 7) General Business
- 8) Unscheduled Business
- 9) Adjournment

3.7 Public Comments. At the public comment portion of the agenda anyone can address the Planning Commission on any topic not related to items on the agenda. During the public comment portion of the agenda each person is limited to five minutes and anyone representing a group is limited to ten minutes.

3.8 Public Hearings. Public hearings shall be scheduled and due notice given in accordance with the provisions of the acts and ordinance cited in Section 1. Public hearings conducted by the Planning Commission shall be run in an orderly and timely fashion, accomplished by the Chairperson using the following procedure:

- 1) Announce the subject of the public hearing, and that a recommendation of the Planning Commission goes to the City Commission for final action.
- 2) Announce that the public hearing will be opened for public comments and closed at the conclusion of the public participation, that the Planning Commission will then review the facts presented among Commission members only and that no further public participation will be permitted.
- 3) Announce that each speaker is to begin by giving his or her name and address, and that each speaker avoid repetition of points previously described, and that other than the applicant, speakers are limited to five minutes, and anyone representing a group is limited to ten minutes.
- 4) Announce the order of presentations to be made:
 - a) Public hearing is opened
 - b) Staff provides review and recommendation
 - c) Opportunity for applicant to make a presentation
 - d) Opportunity for those in favor to speak
 - e) Opportunity for those in opposition to speak
 - f) Any written materials received are read
 - g) Rebuttal by applicant to opposition
 - h) Public hearing is closed
 - i) Fact finding discussion by Planning Commission
 - j) Action taken by the Planning Commission

3.9 Recusement. If a Planning Commission member feels as though his/her personal interest in an issue could influence the discussion or decision on an issue, he/she shall ask to be recused. If a majority vote of the Planning Commission determines the same, then the member shall be recused. If a Planning Commission member owns or has interest in a property that is within the legal notice area of an issue, he/she shall be recused.

If the member is recused, then they shall leave their normal seating location and join the audience for the entirety of the proceeding on that issue.

3.10 Motions. Drafts for motions on all issues reviewed by the Planning Commission may be prepared by staff prior to the discussion.

Motions by the Planning Commission can be voted on whether they are made in the affirmative or negative. The goal in all motions is that they are clear and understandable by all.

Motions shall be restated by the Secretary at the request of the chairperson or any other member of the Planning Commission before a vote is taken. The motion, name of the motion maker, name of the supporter, and vote on the motion shall be recorded.

3.11 Voting. Voting shall ordinarily be by voice vote, provided however that a roll call vote shall be required if directed by the Chairperson. It is the duty of all members of the Planning Commission to vote on all motions, and the Chairperson shall vote last. Any member may be excused from voting if that person has a genuine conflict of interest as recognized by the majority of the remaining members of the Planning Commission. Any member who makes a determination that he/she has a conflict of interest shall not participate in the discussion on that item from that point forward.

3.12 Notice of Decision. If further action is required by the City Commission, written notice containing the decision of the Planning Commission shall be prepared by staff and sent to the Planning Commission Chairperson and to the Mayor and City Commission.

3.13 Rules of Order. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Commission in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Planning Commission may adopt.

4. MINUTES

Planning Commission minutes shall be prepared by the Recording Secretary of the Planning Commission. The minutes shall contain a brief synopsis of the meeting including a recording of Planning Commission member's attendance, a complete restatement of all motions, and recording of votes. All communications and any actions

taken shall be attached to the minutes. The official records shall be annually deposited in the Office of the City Clerk.

Draft minutes shall be complete within 8 work days of the meeting.

5. COMMITTEES

5.1 Committee of the Whole. Whenever the Planning Commission moves into a working session during a regular Planning Commission meeting, or schedules a special meeting to conduct a working session, the Planning Commission shall meet as a Committee of the Whole. The regular Chairperson shall preside over the Committee of the Whole, and in the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside. Meetings of the Committee of the Whole shall conform to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act.

6. MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON BY STAFF ON BEHALF OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission staff shall take action and make recommendations in the name of the Planning Commission in accordance with such plans, policies, and procedures established by the Planning Commission. If a serious conflict of interest, public controversy, or uncertainty as to the plans, policies, or procedures approved by the Planning Commission occurs; staff shall make the matter known for resolution by the Planning Commission.

7. OPEN MEETINGS AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PROVISIONS

All deliberations and decisions of the Planning Commission shall be made at meetings open to the public and held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. All records, files, publications, correspondence, and other materials will be made available to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

8. AMENDMENTS

These rules may be amended by the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the Planning Commission during any regular meeting, provided that all members have received an advance copy of the proposed amendments at least one week prior to the meeting at which such amendments are to be considered.

THESE BYLAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE WERE ORIGINALLY ADOPTED ON FEBRUARY 20, 1991.

AMENDMENTS TO SUBSECTIONS 2.1, 3.2, 3.8(4) AND 5.1 WERE MADE ON APRIL 15, 1992

AMENDMENTS TO SUBSECTIONS 2.1, 3.2 and 5 WERE MADE ON JUNE 15, 2005.

OVERALL AMENDMENTS AND AMENDMENTS TO SUBSECTIONS 2.1, 2.5, AND 2.6 WERE MADE ACCORDING TO THE PLANNING ENABLING ACT, P.A. 33 OF 2008 ON NOVEMBER 20, 2013

City of Big Rapids

Annual Report of Planning and Zoning

2023



Introduction

The Annual Report of Planning and Zoning is prepared for several reasons:

1. It is called for in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act:
“A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development.”
2. It increases information sharing between staff, the Planning Commission, the City Commission, and the general public.
3. It allows for anticipation of upcoming issues and priorities, in order to prepare and budget for them, if necessary.
4. It is an opportunity to thank the Commission members for their time and work over the past year, and to recognize the accomplishments of the year.

The City of Big Rapids broadens the scope required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to prepare an Annual Report of Planning and Zoning, which also includes the actions of the Zoning Board of Appeals and other relevant actions undertaken over the course of the year. The Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals both serve vital functions to the City, and their respective members volunteer their time and knowledge to help make Big Rapids a stronger community. Staff thanks them for their service to Big Rapids and their commitment to public service.





Planning Commission

Meetings, Membership, and Decisions

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is a board appointed by the City Commission to assist in the administration of the Zoning Ordinance. The duties of the Planning Commission include development and administration of the Zoning Ordinance, consideration of text or map amendments to the Ordinance, requests for conditional use permits, and review of site plans. The Planning Commission also reviews Site Plans for development projects to take place within the city boundaries. These actions help to ensure that the City of Big Rapids is and remains a vibrant, resilient community.

Membership

Membership on the Planning Commission changed slightly during 2023. At the beginning of 2023, membership consisted of the following members:

Name:	
Rory Ruddick	-
Chris Jane	-
Kate McLeod	-
Kasey Thompson	-
Jacob Buse	-
Sarah Montgomery	-

By the end of 2023, the Commission looked like this:

Name:	Term Expires:
Rory Ruddick	05/24
Kate McLeod	05/25
Jacob Buse	05/25
Sarah Montgomery	05/25
Tim Vogel	05/25

Meetings

The Planning Commission held 10 regular meetings and 1 special meeting in 2023. This exceeds the MPEA requirements of at least 4 meetings annually. The regularly scheduled meeting time was the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM. The Planning Commission typically meets in the Commission Room at the Big Rapids City Hall.

A summary of the Planning Commission meetings of 2023 follows:

January 18, 2023

- Public Hearing: The Planning Commission discussed the City of Big Rapids Economic Development Strategy and recommended its approval by the City Commission.
- General Business: City Attorney Brad Fowler gave an update to the commission on the regulation of manufactured housing.

February 15, 2023

- First meeting with new Community Development Director Michelle Stenger.
- Public Hearing: Site Plan Review Application for a facility expansion at 525 N DeKrafft Avenue. Approved

with Conditions.

- Public Hearing: Site Plan Review for an improved parking lot at City-owned property 201 N Bronson Avenue (Dial-a-Ride building). Approved.
- General Business: The Planning Commission discussed the 2023-2029 Capital Improvements Program and recommended its approval to the City Commission.
- General Business: Staff presented the 2022 Annual Report on Planning and Zoning.

March 15, 2023

- General Business: Staff presented to the Planning Commission on regulation of short-term rentals throughout Michigan. The Commission was interested in hearing a draft ordinance in the future.
- General Business: Staff presented on draft ordinance regarding improvements to the quality of housing in Big Rapids.
- Planning & Zoning Technician Emily Szymanski announced her resignation to the commission, and that the meeting would be her last.

April 19, 2023

- Public Hearing: Proposed Amendments to Zoning Ordinance, Section 4.1:25 Single Family Dwellings. Recommended for approval by the City Commission.
- Public Hearing: Site Plan Review for a parking lot alteration at 1020 S State Street (McDonald's) Approved.
- General Business: Short-term rental regulation was discussed at length by the commission. Staff agreed to present the commission with multiple options for ordinance going forward.
- Commissioner Sarah Montgomery elected Chair.

May 17, 2023

- First meeting with new Planning & Zoning Technician Joey Walker.
- Public Hearing: Appeal of Revocation of Marihuana Retail Establishment Operating Permit, Kzoo420, LLC d/b/a Big Rapids Treehouse Club, 217 Maple Street. Revocation affirmed.
- Public Hearing: Special Land Use Request and Site Plan Review for 301 N Bronson Ave for a Communications Tower. Approved.

June 21, 2023

- Public Hearing: Request from Mission Energy Partners to rezone 1107 Colburn Ave from R-1 to R-3 to allow multi-family use. Recommended for denial to the City Commission.
- Public Hearing: Site Plan Review Application for Our Brother's Keeper new building at 505 S 3rd Ave. Approved.
- Public Hearing: Site Plan Amendment Application for an industrial addition for Big Rapids Products at 525, 535, 625 DeKraft Ave. Approved.
- Commissioner Buse elected Vice-Chair.

July 19, 2023

- Public Hearing: Request from Duncan Klussman to rezone 910 Maple Street (17-11-456-007) from I (Industrial) to C-2 (Commercial). Recommended for approval by City Commission.
- Board Training: Director Stenger presented on the history and purpose of planning and zoning in the United States utilizing materials provided by the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association.

August 3, 2023 – Special Meeting

- Public Hearing: Request to determine if there is any existing or intended future public purposes and use of City owned property at 606 Rust Ave, 610 Rust Ave and 614 Rust Ave. The properties were determined to be surplus.

September 20, 2023

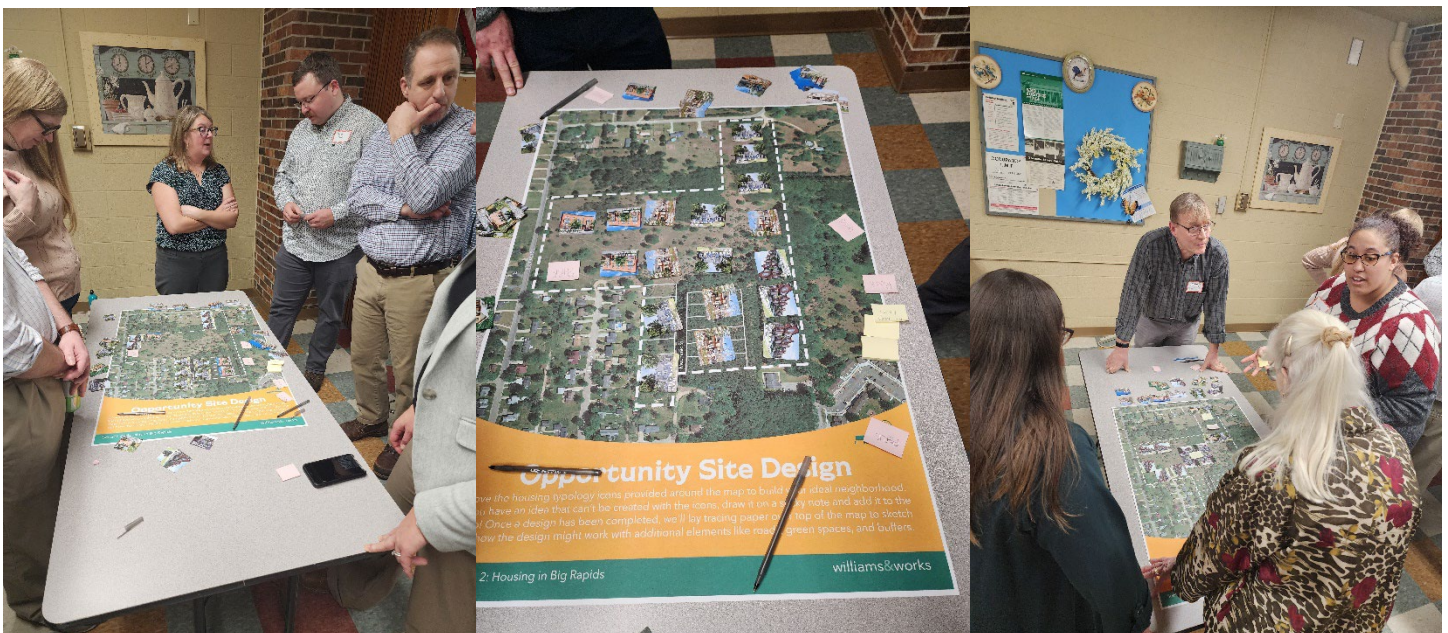
- Public Hearing: Special Use Request to allow a drive thru facility at 900 Water Tower Road. Approved.
- Public Hearing: Site Plan Review for a new financial institution and training facility/meeting area at 900 Water Tower Road. Approved.
- Public Hearing: Site Plan Review for MOISD Agricultural Education Site Development at 504 & 602 S Bronson. Approved with conditions.

October 19, 2023

- Public Hearing: Ordinance for Small Cell Wireless Facilities was presented by City attorney Brad Fowler and recommended for approval to the City Commission.
- General Business: The commission further discussed the regulation of short-term rentals with city staff and Mr. Fowler.
- Board Training: Director Stenger presented to the board on the economics of housing, types of housing, and terminology that would help during the ongoing renewal of the City's Master Plan.

November 15, 2023

- Public Hearing: Ordinance for Short Term Rentals recommended to the City Commission for approval.
- General Business: Update on previously approved project – 827 N State Street (Krist Oil)
- Master Plan Renewal Update
- Small Cell Wireless Update: Staff informed the commission that the ordinance which had been recommended to the City Commission has been passed.





Zoning Board of Appeals

Meetings, Membership, and Decisions

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is a board appointed by the City Commission. The ZBA has the authority to hear appeals of administrative decisions, to interpret the Zoning Ordinance text and map, and to decide on variance requests.

Membership

Membership on the Zoning Board of Appeals changed slightly during 2023. At the beginning of 2023, membership consisted of the following members:

Name:	
Ben Kalis	-
Jane Johansen	-
Paul Zube	-
Mark Walton	-
John Kinthuia Njenja	-

By the end of 2023, the board looked like this:

Name:	Term Expires:
Ben Kalis	05/24
Jane Johansen	05/26
Amanda Frazier	05/26
Deborah Lipnicki	05/24
Paul Zube	05/25
Mark Walton	05/26

Meetings

The Zoning Board of Appeals held 6 regular and 1 special meeting in 2023. The regular meeting time is the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM. The ZBA meets in the Commission Room at Big Rapids City Hall.

A summary of the Zoning Board of Appeals meetings of 2023 follows:

March 23, 2023

- Board Training: City Attorney Brad Fowler presented to the board on the Zoning Board of Appeals' purpose and powers. Mr. Fowler explained the process for reviewing petitions, and the legal issues which can come up during the board's tenure.

April 27, 2023

- Public Hearing: Variance for 605 Oak Street to allow a larger temporary banner/sign than permitted by

right. Approved.

May 15, 2023

- Public Hearing: Non-Use Variance for 1056 N 4th Ave to allow an addition to a garage that does not meet rear setback requirements and is over the maximum lot coverage. Approved.

June 22, 2023

- Public Hearing: Use Variance for 512 Green Street to allow a structure to have more occupants than permitted by right in each duplex. The current property is zoned R-1. Denied.
- Public Hearing: Use Variance for 416 N State St to allow for residential use of a property. Approved.
- Public Hearing: Dimensional Variance for 114 Oak Street to allow a duplex on property that does not meet the minimum square footage requirements. Approved.

August 24, 2023

- Public Hearing: Use Variance for 807 Colburn Avenue to allow a structure to be converted for residential use. Approved.
- Public Hearing: Dimensional Variance for 605 Oak Street to allow additional and larger signs than permitted by right in the R-1 Zoning District. Approved with conditions.
- Public Hearing: Dimensional Variance for 650 Linden Street to allow additional and larger signs than permitted in the R-1 Zoning District. Approved with conditions.
- Public Hearing: Dimensional Variance for 722 Locust Street to allow a larger sign than permitted in the R-1 Zoning District. Approved with conditions.
- Board Training: Director Stenger presented on the history and purpose of planning and zoning in the United States utilizing materials provided by the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association.

October 19, 2023 – Special Meeting

- Public Hearing: Dimensional Variance for 1003 Maple Street to allow a porch and steps to encroach the front setback requirement of the C-3 Zoning District. Approved.

November 30, 2023

- Public Hearing: Dimensional Variance for 523 Rust Ave to allow a porch roof to be closer to the front property line than permitted by right. Approved.





Master Plan Renewal

Outreach and Progress

Master Plan Update

As a matter of good planning practices and in pursuit of Redevelopment Ready Community certification, the City of Big Rapids with the help of the planners from Williams & Works is currently working on a new master plan. This document will form the basis of the city's planning, zoning, and land use decisions for the next five to ten years. City staff and Williams & Works planners have engaged in multiple community outreach events in order to receive input and ideas from the public and various stakeholders in the city. These events have included:

- Neighborhood centered focus groups bringing in selected representatives from each of the city's six neighborhoods.
- A community survey distributed online and in person allowing citizens to state and prioritize the changes they would like to see in their community.
- Public input sessions at the downtown farmer's market and Summerfest.
- Multiple meetings of the Master Plan Steering Committee comprised of the following community members:

Master Plan Steering Committee
Dave Hamlund
Steve Cramer
Mark Speas
Mark Walton
Kate McLeod
Linda Miller
Ferris State University Representatives
City Staff



Additionally, in January 4 charettes were held encouraging creative thinking and openly sharing ideas about specific areas and topics of interest in the city. The first three sessions were by invite and included various stakeholders and interested parties while the session focusing on the Big Rapids Downtown was open to the public. The topics covered included:

- Reimagining Maple Street
- Housing in Big Rapids
- Bike, Walk, and Roll through Big Rapids
- Activate Downtown Big Rapids

Goals and Opportunities

Priorities, actions, and challenges going forward

Goals and Opportunities

The process of renewing the master plan is an opportunity for the city to set new goals and identify challenges for itself, but also to reprioritize and assess the goals it set in its previous Master Plan. The Action Plan in the 2018 Addendum to the 2009 Master Plan identifies goals for 7 key areas the city wanted and wants to affect change in. The new Master Plan will help the city reach some of its more recent goals such as Redevelopment Ready Community certification, which a new or updated plan is required for. The plan will also serve as the basis for planning and zoning policy changes to further strengthen our efforts towards the goals in both the old and those identified in the new plan.

Many of these goals laid out in the old Master Plan are ongoing efforts in the city's day-to-day operation, such as maintaining high levels of public services, promoting the strengths of our city, or coordination with state agencies or local institutions like Ferris to develop and grow Big Rapids. Some have changed drastically and have become new challenges for the city, such as those regarding population. A combination of factors including the pandemic led to a significant drop the Big Rapids census count, creating new challenges both in terms of funding and also accurate reports of demographic or population change in the city. Despite staff's efforts, no clear path to a recount or recouping the funding is currently feasible, and this new challenge will likely be one the city faces until the next census. Other goals have led to significant change and projects now coming to fruition such as expanding housing opportunities in the city through investments in infrastructure and coordination on the Mechanic Street and Rust Avenue expansions.

Mechanic Street in particular is close to delivering 4 homes utilizing funds from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) Missing Middle Housing Program and are working with the MOISD on delivery of a fifth unit. Providing high quality housing at subsidized prices, targeting middle income buyers. Further construction of a diverse array of housing in the Mechanic Street expansion was a topic of excitement and optimism at Master Plan sessions. The new infrastructure in this neighborhood presents the city with some of its best opportunities to tackle our housing goals going forward. The goals laid out in the current Master Plan follow this section.



Population

The City of Big Rapids will work towards creating a steady increase in population by providing a range of opportunities within the City that are important to attracting a diverse population that includes family households, senior citizens, college students, and others.

1. Expand housing opportunities for all types of households.
2. Maintain and improve residential areas by enforcing regulations and working with homeowners.
3. Promote the City's strengths to attract residents and businesses through advertising.
4. Work with the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure a complete count of residents.
5. Maintain a high level of public services.
6. Work with local schools to promote the area's schools to potential families.
7. Work with surrounding townships to promote area-wide growth and maintain good working relationships.

Housing

The City of Big Rapids will work towards creating a balanced range of housing opportunities that includes well-maintained single-family homes, multiple family units, and other types of housing.

1. Expand housing opportunities for all types of households, utilizing the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance to encourage quality development and redevelopment.
2. Identify capital improvements needed to expand housing opportunities and seek funding for those projects.
3. Develop improvements need to expand housing opportunities and seek funding for those improvements.
4. Ensure that inadequate maintenance of housing does not detract from neighborhoods by enforcing regulations and responding to concerns.
5. Explore the possibility of creating a land bank.
6. Promote small housing developments and encourage development of smaller, more affordable and sustainable housing.
7. Determine the feasibility of implementing a variety of incentive programs to encourage property owners to invest in City neighborhoods.
8. Encourage sustainable homeownership by providing information to potential and existing homeowners.
9. Evaluate the status of the Actions and make necessary adjustments.

Transportation

The City of Big Rapids will work towards improving the City's streets through the use of asset management and will strive to reduce the impacts of traffic through the use of asset management and improvements to the transportation network.

1. Implement a transportation asset management program.
2. Coordinate transportation improvements with other improvements to minimize repeating maintenance actions and closure of street
3. Develop an Access Management Plan for the City's and Township's commercial corridors (especially State Street and Perry Avenue).
4. Promote bicycling on trails and bicycle lanes.
5. Work with the City's Dial-a-Ride Transit System (DART) to provide an adequate level of public transit.
6. Determine the feasibility of an additional bridge across the Muskegon River on the City's south side.
7. Develop a Capital Improvements Schedule that will identify when to pave all remaining gravel roads within the City and provide sidewalks where beneficial.
8. Evaluate the status of the Actions and make necessary adjustments.

Downtown

The City of Big Rapids will work towards improving the vitality of the downtown by maintaining and improving public facilities and encouraging merchants, property-owners, and residents to maintain and improve their facilities.

1. Work with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to maintain and improve the City's Downtown area by participating in programs to improve the Downtown's physical and economic well-being.
2. Work with property owners to encourage an improved transition between the downtown and surrounding land uses. Develop a detailed action plan to address this issue.
3. Work with downtown business owners to maintain an up-to-date list of issues and to identify the best way to address issues related to infrastructure, streetscape, and vacancies.
4. Work with downtown business owners to promote downtown activities, such as the farmer's market, to attract shoppers.
5. Work to maintain public facilities in the downtown area to ensure that users of these services frequently visit the business area.

6. Evaluate the status of the Actions and make necessary adjustments.

Cooperation and Coordination

The City of Big Rapids will strive to work closely with Ferris State University, Big Rapids Township, Green Township, Mecosta County, Big Rapids Public Schools, the State of Michigan, the Federal Government, and others to seek efficient and effective methods to provide public services and up-to-date facilities.

1. Continue to provide water and sewer services to residents and businesses and work with the surrounding townships of Big Rapids and Green to provide an appropriate level of water and sewer capacity to encourage growth in the area.
2. Coordinate and host an area Planning Commission meeting and training, inviting the planning bodies of the two townships and Mecosta County.
3. Work with Big Rapids and Green Townships, as well as others, to provide efficient and effective fire and police protection to the area.
4. Work with the surrounding townships, Big Rapids Public Schools, Mecosta County, and the State of Michigan to provide an appropriate level of recreational activities for the area's residents by considering the development of a joint recreation plan.
5. Evaluate the status of the Actions and make necessary adjustments.

Public Facilities and Services

The City of Big Rapids will strive to maintain an appropriate level of public facilities and services by improving facilities, planning for the future needs of the community, seeking funding from a variety of sources, and involving the community in the decision-making and budgeting processes.

1. Maintain an up-to-date Capital Improvements Program and Maintain an up-to-date recreation plan.
2. Survey residents every three to five years to determine their satisfaction related to public facilities and services.
3. Strive to seek outside funding resources to assist in funding public projects and programs.
4. Ensure that all public facilities are planned, designed, and constructed to be sustainable.
5. Work with Big Rapids Public Schools, charter/private schools, and the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District to identify future facilities' needs.

6. Evaluate the status of the Actions and make necessary adjustments.

Economic Development

The City of Big Rapids will promote an appropriate amount of land and resources to manufacturing, commercial, and other land use categories that provides opportunities for businesses to expand or locate in Big Rapids.

1. Ensure the City has adequate infrastructure in place to meet the needs of
2. existing and new businesses by maintaining an up-to-date Capital Improvements Program.
3. Promote jobs in Big Rapids related to programs offered at Ferris State University by determining the feasibility of creating a business incubator centered on skills provided at the University.
4. Ensure the City's industrial park and industrial areas address the needs of existing and potential businesses.
5. Work with Mecosta County Development Corporation (MCDC) to help existing businesses expand and to help attract new businesses to the City.
6. Work with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to promote the area to existing employers and potential employers.
7. Work with MCDC, MEDC, and others such as the Mecosta County Area Chamber of Commerce and the Michigan State University Extension to diversify the area's economy by promoting the area for value-added agriculture, renewable energy, health sciences, tourism, education, and other employment opportunities.
8. Work with the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission to attract funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and other federal and state agencies.
9. Work closely with the Downtown Business Association, the Chamber of Commerce, and business groups to promote commercial and service growth in Big Rapids.
10. Work closely with the Convention and Visitor's Bureau to promote Big Rapids as a destination for visitors.
11. Continue to improve the downtown and promote it as a destination for visitors and a viable shopping option for residents by following the recommendations of the 2006 "Big Rapids Development Blueprint" and updating the document and process when actions are completed.
12. Evaluate the status of the Actions and make necessary adjustments.

Conclusion

This past year was quite active for both the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. Between a high number of requests and meetings as well as a transition of staff in the Community Development Department, city planning and zoning processes were carried out without major issues. In addition to their hours of public service on their commission or board, many of our members have volunteered more of their time to participate in our Master Plan renewal process which will shape their own tenures as well as those of future members.

In conclusion, the process of renewing the master plan has provided the City of Big Rapids with a valuable opportunity to set new goals and assess the effectiveness of previous initiatives. The Action Plan outlined in the 2018 Addendum to the 2009 Master Plan has identified key areas for improvement, aligning with the city's goals of achieving the Redevelopment Ready Community certification and implementing policy changes to enhance planning and zoning efforts. While some goals from the old Master Plan remain ongoing priorities, such as maintaining public services and promoting the city's strengths, new challenges have emerged, including fluctuations in population count and funding. Despite these challenges, the city has made significant progress in areas such as expanding housing opportunities, with projects like the Mechanic Street and Rust Avenue expansions. Moving forward, the new Master Plan will serve as a blueprint for continued growth and development, guiding the city towards a more prosperous future.



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